

## Sixth Sunday of Easter

*Acts 8:5–8, 14–17; 1 Peter 3:15–18; John 14:15–21*

*Love Jesus, Keep His Commandments, Bear Witness in*

### Hope INTRODUCTION

A little boy once stood at the edge of a swimming pool, trembling at the thought of jumping into the deep water. He wanted to swim, but fear held him back. His father knelt beside him and said gently, *"I will let you swim, but I will never let you drown."*

Slowly, the boy stepped forward, feeling the steady hand of his father beneath him. With each small step, his courage grew, and he finally let go and floated on the water, safe in the presence of the one who loved him.

Brothers and sisters, today we gather in the presence of the risen Lord, who invites us to step forward in faith. Just as the boy trusted his father, we are called to trust Christ. Even when we cannot see Him clearly, even when life feels uncertain or overwhelming, He promises never to abandon us. He gives us His Spirit, our Advocate, to guide us, comfort us, and strengthen us in hope, love, and courage.

In our lives, there are moments when fear, doubt, or loneliness hold us back. There are times when we are tempted to act selfishly, to be impatient with others, or to lose hope. Today's readings remind us that God's love is stronger than our weakness, that the Spirit of the risen Christ is with us, and that even small steps of faith, guided by love, bear witness to His Kingdom.

As we prepare to celebrate the Eucharist, let us take a moment to reflect quietly on our lives—our choices, our struggles, and our failings. Let us bring them before the Lord, trusting that His mercy is greater than our sin, and that His Spirit is ever ready to lift us, guide us, and make us instruments of His love.

### PENITENTIAL ACT

Lord Jesus, you come to heal and restore: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you give us the Spirit to guide us in love: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you promise to be with us always, even when we falter: **Lord, have mercy.**

## PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May Almighty God, who is rich in mercy, through the tender love of Jesus Christ, forgive us our sins, renew our hearts with His Spirit, and strengthen us to walk in faith, hope, and love and lead us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO THE GLORIA

Let us praise God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with hearts lifted in joy, as we sing the Gloria for the victory of Christ over death.

## COLLECT

Almighty and loving God,  
in this Easter season you call us to rejoice in the resurrection of your Son.

Open our hearts to the power of your Spirit, that we may love with courage, obey your commandments with joy, and bear witness to the hope that lives in us.

Help us, even in the ordinary days, to see Christ in our neighbours, to be instruments of your peace, and to bring your light to places of darkness.

Through our Lord, Jesus Christ, you Son... Amen

## HOMILY

A young girl once wanted to learn how to ride her bicycle without training wheels. Every time she tried, she wobbled and fell. Her older brother ran beside her, holding the seat, encouraging her: “I won’t let go until you’re ready.”

At first, she was afraid—afraid of falling, afraid of failing. But step by step, push by push, she found her balance. One day, her brother let go for just a moment. She wobbled, panicked, and then—somehow—she stayed upright, pedalling on her own. When she looked back, her brother was cheering, proud but nearby, ready to catch her if she fell.

Dear brothers and sisters, today’s readings remind us of the same truth. Jesus tells His disciples: “I will not leave you orphans.” He knows their fear, their confusion, their longing for guidance. And like the brother beside the girl, He is with us—not to control our every move, but to give us the courage to take our own steps, trusting in His Spirit, our Advocate.

We all know what it is to hesitate, to fear, to feel unsteady in life. Whether it is starting a new job, facing illness, or mending a broken relationship, the Holy Spirit is there, steadying us, encouraging us, helping us find balance.

At the Last Supper, the disciples were losing what they loved most. For three years, Jesus had been their teacher, protector, and friend. He defended them, guided them, stood beside them. And now He says He is leaving. Yet He promises: “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Advocate to be with you forever.”

Another Advocate. Another Helper. The Paraclete.

Someone who stands beside you under pressure, speaks for you when you cannot find the words, defends you when you feel accused.

We like to think we can manage on our own—like a little boy trying to fly a kite on a windless day, running faster, pulling harder, until he collapses in frustration. An old man watching him said gently: “You cannot make the wind. But when it comes, lift the kite—and it will carry it for you.”

The Holy Spirit is that wind. We cannot produce faith by force. We cannot manufacture hope. But when we open our hearts, when we lift the fragile kite of our lives toward God, the Spirit carries us.

The first reading shows this in action. Philip goes to Samaria—a place of mixed beliefs, suspicion, and old conflicts. Jews and Samaritans avoided one another. Humanly speaking, it was not fertile ground. Yet Philip simply proclaims Christ. No complicated theories. No grand strategy. He speaks about Jesus—and people listen. They are healed. Freed. There is “great joy in that city.”

Imagine that: great joy in a divided city. The fields were ripe for harvest, as Jesus once said. Not because everything was perfect, but because hearts were ready. Philip did not work alone. The Spirit was already there, like the wind waiting for the kite to be lifted.

But how do we see that Spirit? How do we see Christ, now that He is no longer visible? A grandfather once gave his granddaughter a strange picture—just a jumble of colours.

“There’s nothing there,” she said. “Look longer,” he replied. “Look with patience.” Suddenly she saw it: a shepherd and sheep hidden in the pattern. The picture had not changed. She had.

Jesus says, “The world will no longer see me, but you will see me.” We see not with our eyes, but with the eyes of the heart. Love teaches us how to see.

He tells us: “If you love me, keep my commandments.” At first, that sounds like a rulebook. But it is not the tone of threat. It is the language of relationship: “If you love me...” Love is not just a feeling. It becomes visible in action.

A woman once visited her lonely neighbour every Thursday. No applause. No recognition. After the neighbour died, a note was found in her Bible: “Thank you, Lord, for sending me an angel every week.” She had become a living Gospel.

We are, someone once said, the only Bible many people still read.

Saint Peter writes: “Always be ready to give an answer to anyone who asks you for the reason for the hope that is in you.” Notice—he does not say, force others. He says, be ready when they ask. But will they ask? Perhaps only if they see something different in us.

In a world often marked by anxiety, bitterness, and division, what if Christians looked... redeemed? Nietzsche once remarked that Christians would have to look more redeemed if he were to believe in their Redeemer. It is sharp—but maybe helpful. Hope does not mean life is easy. It means we believe we are not orphans. That even our brokenness is not wasted.

In Japan there is an art called kintsugi. When a bowl breaks, it is repaired with gold. The cracks are not hidden; they shine. The object becomes more beautiful because it was broken. Christ was broken on the cross. But the Father raised Him. Because of that, our cracks can be filled with grace. Our wounds can shine.

This is the work of the Holy Spirit: to keep the relationship alive. Jesus says, “You will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.” Astonishing. We are drawn into the very life of God. The love between Father and Son is poured into our hearts.

Saint Paul writes: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.” Not sprinkled. Poured.

And that changes how we live. It changes how we see. It even changes how we face death.

A nurse once cared for a dying woman who was afraid each night. She had no great theological explanations. She simply sat beside her bed, held her hand. One evening the patient whispered, “When you are here, I feel that God has not forgotten me.” The nurse had become an advocate—a visible sign of the invisible Spirit.

And so we return to the bicycle. The brother did, in fact, let go. The girl rode on her own. For a moment she wobbled—until she felt her brother cheering beside her. He had not left. He had simply given her space to grow.

Jesus has “let go” in one sense. He is no longer visible as He once was. But He has not abandoned us. Through the Holy Spirit, He is beside us and within us. He lets us take our own steps—but He will not let us fall.

“I will not leave you orphans.”

If we believe that, we can love without fear. We can forgive. We can stand by one another. We can lift the kite when the wind begins to blow. We can become living windows through which Christ’s light shines into an ordinary, sometimes dark world.

And perhaps one day someone will look at us and ask, quietly, “Why are you still hopeful?”

And we will be able to answer, gently and simply: “Because I am not alone. Because He lives. Because the Spirit carries me.” Amen.

## **INVITATION TO THE CREDO**

With hearts renewed by the Spirit, let us now profess our faith together in the words the Church has entrusted to us:

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

As we bring our gifts to the altar, let us also offer our hearts and our lives, recognizing that every act of love and service is a reflection of Christ living in us. May our offerings be acceptable to God the Father almighty.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,  
receive these gifts, signs of our gratitude and faith.  
Transform this bread and wine into the body and blood of your Son, Jesus Christ,  
that we may be nourished in hope, strengthened in love,  
and empowered by your Spirit to be witnesses of Your Kingdom in our families, our communities, and the world.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give You thanks, Lord, Holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For by the resurrection of your Son, Jesus Christ, you have poured your love into our hearts, and through the gift of your Holy Spirit, you dwell within us, guiding our steps, strengthening our hope, and inspiring our love.

You have given us an Advocate, who reminds us of your truth, comforts us in weakness, and empowers us to bear witness to your Kingdom. Through this Spirit, even the unseen Christ is present in our lives, and His love becomes visible in our actions, in our care for one another, and in our steadfast hope.

Therefore, with angels and saints, with hearts lifted in gratitude, we proclaim your glory and join in their unending hymn: **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Trusting in God's providence and love, let us pray together as Jesus taught us:

### EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, from every evil, visible and hidden.

Free us from fear, doubt, and despair.

Strengthen us to live as witnesses of the risen Christ, confident that we are never abandoned. Send your Holy Spirit, our Advocate, to guide our words, enlighten our minds, and move our hearts to love as Jesus loves.

May the Spirit sustain us in every trial, lift us when we fall, and help us bear your light into the world. May our lives reflect the hope, faith, and love you have poured into us, until the day of the glorious coming of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, you promised that we would not be left as orphans, that your Spirit would dwell within us and guide us.

Grant us your peace—peace in our hearts, in our families, and in our communities.

Help us forgive as you forgive, love as you love, and stand beside one another as faithful witnesses.

Fill us with courage to face conflict, patience to endure trials, and hope that shines even in darkness.

Let this peace, flowing from your Spirit, transform our lives, and make us channels of your love and healing in a world longing for reconciliation.

### INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Come to the table of the Lord, not because we are perfect, but because we are loved.

Take this Bread of Life, receive His Body and Blood, and allow Christ's Spirit to strengthen your hope, guide your steps, and inflame your heart with love.

## MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Christ has given us His Spirit, the Advocate, who dwells within us.

In this Spirit we find hope to endure trials, faith to see what is invisible, and love that transforms the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Let us be people who:

- Love with patience, even when unnoticed;
- Forgive when it is hardest;
- Speak hope gently, yet powerfully;
- Stand beside one another when the winds of life blow strong;
- Allow Christ to shine through our words, our actions, and our presence.

May the Spirit we have received guide our hearts, renew our courage, and fill our lives with the quiet joy of the resurrection.

## POST-COMMUNION PRAYER

Lord God, we have shared in this Eucharist and have tasted the life of your Son.

Renew us by your Spirit, that we may love more deeply, forgive more freely, and witness more courageously. Help us, in the days ahead, to be living signs of your presence, channels of hope, and instruments of your peace in the world.

Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## FINAL BLESSING

May God, who is love, fill your hearts with joy and peace.

May Christ, who gave Himself for you, strengthen your faith and hope.

And may the Holy Spirit, your Advocate, guide you always in love and courage, so that your life may bear witness to the Risen Lord.

**And may Almighty God bless you, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace, living the love and hope of the Risen Lord.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Remember the promise of Christ: *“I will never leave you orphans.”*

Step forward in faith, let love be your guide, and allow the Spirit to carry you through every trial, bringing hope to the world around you.

## Monday, Sixth Week of Easter

*Acts 16:11-15; John 15:26–16:4*

## INTRODUCTION

A man once spoke about a difficult period in his life when he had lost direction and hope. One day, a neighbour simply invited him for a meal. There was nothing extraordinary—just food, conversation, and kindness. But that simple gesture changed something in him. “It felt,” he said, “as if a door had opened again.” Later, he began reaching out to others in the same quiet way.

That is often how God works—through open hearts and simple acts of generosity. In today’s readings, we hear how the Lord opened the heart of Lydia to receive the Gospel, and how she responded immediately with hospitality and generosity.

As we gather for this Eucharist, we remember that we too have received so much from God. Let us ask for the grace to be open-hearted, to welcome his Spirit, and to share with others what we have first received.

## **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS** Lord

Jesus, you open our hearts to receive your grace,  
yet we often remain closed to others:

**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you call us to share generously what we  
have received, yet we hold back in fear or indifference:

**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you send us your Spirit to strengthen our  
witness, yet we fail to trust in your guidance:

**Lord, have mercy.**

## **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God, who calls us to open our hearts  
and to share the gifts we have received,  
have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

## **COLLECT**

O God, who open hearts to receive your word  
and fill them with the grace of your Spirit,  
grant, we pray, that we may respond with generous faith,  
sharing with others what we have received from you

and bearing witness to your love in our daily lives.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## **HOMILY**

I once heard a story about a young teacher who noticed a  
lonely boy in her class. One day, she invited him to join a  
small after-school reading group. That simple act of  
attention and care helped him find confidence and  
friendship—an example of how small gestures can  
transform lives.

This reminds me of Lydia in today's first reading. She was  
a woman whose heart "the Lord opened." She received the  
Gospel, was baptized with her household, and immediately  
offered hospitality to Paul and his companions. Freely she  
received; freely she gave.

Lydia shows us that faith is never meant to stay private.  
God's grace is meant to flow outward—in service, in  
kindness, and in welcome.

In the Gospel, Jesus tells us that witnessing is not always

easy. We may encounter resistance or difficulty. But he promises the Advocate, the Spirit of Truth, who strengthens us to remain faithful.

There is a beautiful exchange here: Paul brings the Gospel to Lydia, and Lydia, through her generosity, supports Paul's mission. This is the rhythm of Christian life—receive grace, share grace. In giving, we also receive.

Even in our daily struggles, we are called to remain open, trust the Spirit, and continue giving. In doing so, we become channels of God's love and discover that we too are strengthened along the way.

I once heard of an elderly man who loved tending his small garden. One spring, he noticed a neighbour struggling with weeds and a barren patch of soil. Without hesitation, he offered to help. Together, they planted flowers and vegetables. Over time, the garden flourished, but something more remarkable happened—the two neighbours, once strangers, became friends. The man later said, "I gave my time and care, but in return, I received joy and companionship I never expected."

Like Lydia, like that young teacher, and like the gardener, we see that when we open our hearts to others, God's grace flows both ways. We give, and we receive; we serve, and we are strengthened. May we, too, live lives of generous faith, trusting the Spirit to guide us in every small act of love.

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

As we bring to the altar the gifts we have received from the Lord, let us also offer our lives, asking for the grace to share generously with others what we ourselves have first received. Pray that my sacrifice and yours may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Receive, O Lord, we pray, the offerings we bring before you, and grant that, as we have received your gifts with open hearts, we may learn to share them generously in service of one another and for the glory of your name. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.

For in your loving plan  
you open the hearts of your people  
to receive the light of your word  
and the grace of your Spirit.

You call us not only to believe,  
but to bear witness through lives of generosity and love,  
so that what we have received from you  
may become a blessing for others. Through Christ our  
Lord.

And so, with Angels and Archangels we proclaim your glory  
and join in their unending hymn: **Holy, Holy, Holy Lord...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Called to share what we have received  
and trusting in the Spirit who sustains us,  
we dare to say:

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and open our hearts to trust in your Spirit,  
that we may be free from fear  
and generous in sharing the gifts we have received;  
graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, by the help of your mercy,  
we may be always free from sin  
and safe from all distress,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, who send us your Spirit  
to guide and strengthen our witness,  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who opens our hearts and calls us to share in his life.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, you have opened our hearts  
and filled us with your grace.  
Teach us to carry this gift into the world—  
to give without counting,  
to serve without hesitation,  
and to trust that your Spirit  
is at work in and through us.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May this Sacrament we have received, O Lord,  
strengthen us by your Spirit,  
that we may live as faithful witnesses of your love  
and generously share with others  
what you have given us.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## BLESSING

May almighty God,  
who opens our hearts and fills us with his Spirit,  
help you to live as generous witnesses of his love,  
and bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.  
**Thanks be to God.**

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God opens our hearts not just to receive—but to give.  
What grace have you received this week,  
and how will you share it with someone else?

## Tuesday, Sixth Week of Easter

*Acts 16:22-34; John 16:5-11*

### INTRODUCTION

A few years ago, a friend told me about a small, abandoned garden behind her apartment. One morning, she noticed a tiny sprout breaking through the cracked concrete. At first, it seemed insignificant, almost fragile, and she worried it wouldn't survive. But over weeks, that small shoot grew, strengthened by sun, rain, and careful tending, until it became a flourishing plant.

Life often works in a similar way. From small, seemingly fragile beginnings—or even moments of loss—we can see new growth, new life, and unexpected blessings emerge. In today's Gospel, Jesus prepares His disciples for a kind of "departure" that is much deeper than anything we normally experience. Just as the sprout breaks through the concrete to grow, so too will the Spirit break through fear, sorrow, and uncertainty to bring life, guidance, and hope to those who trust in Him.

Departures are never easy. They awaken sadness, uncertainty, and sometimes fear. But they also make room for growth, for transformation, and for a presence that is even more intimate and life-giving than what was left behind. Today, we reflect on how Jesus turns the sadness of His leaving into the promise of the Holy Spirit—a presence that transforms, enlightens, and guides us through every challenge and loss.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you turn our sorrow into hope and lead us into new life: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you send us the Holy Spirit to guide, teach, and strengthen us: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you open our hearts to trust in God's plan even in times of loss: **Lord, have mercy.**

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and, through the gift of the Holy Spirit, lead us from sorrow into joy and from fear into trust in his loving plan. **Amen.**

## COLLECT

O God, who by the mystery of your Son's departure entrusted your Church to the guidance of the Holy Spirit, grant, we pray, that amid the uncertainties and changes of this life, we may always trust in your loving presence and be led into the fullness of truth and joy. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

Jesus speaks to His friends on the night before His crucifixion: "You are sad at heart." Their grief is real; they face the loss of His physical presence. Yet Jesus reassures them that this departure is not the end. By returning to the Father, He will send the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, who will dwell within them, guiding, teaching, and comforting them. In losing Him physically, they gain a presence even more powerful.

Life often brings losses and endings that hurt deeply, but these moments can also be transformative. Jesus compares it to a seed that must fall to the ground and die in order to bear fruit. Our struggles, disappointments, and farewells can become opportunities for grace and growth when we allow the Spirit to work through them.

The Spirit also "convicts the world concerning sin, righteousness, and judgment." Human perspective is limited; we often misjudge what is right. The Spirit opens our hearts to divine understanding, helping us see with clarity, act with wisdom, and live with humility.

Thus, Jesus' departure is both a loss and a gain. Pain is real, yet it leads to new life. Sadness is deep, yet it makes room for joy. Endings prepare the way for beginnings, and letting go opens us to God's fuller presence. In daily life—through loss, change, or challenge—we are called to trust that God is guiding us, bringing life and hope where we least expect it.

Returning to the image of growth, the small sprout in a cracked garden becomes a flourishing plant through

patience, care, and persistence. Likewise, the Spirit nurtures our hearts through trials, turning sorrow into joy and loss into life. Jesus' departure was not the end for His disciples—it was the beginning of Spirit-filled life, a gift He continues to offer us today.

Let us pray for the grace to trust God's guidance in times of loss, to welcome the Spirit into our hearts, and to see every ending as a doorway to new life.

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

As we place these gifts on the altar, let us entrust to God all the losses, changes, and uncertainties of our lives, asking that the Holy Spirit transform them into grace and new life.

### **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

May our prayers rise up to you, O Lord, together with these sacrificial offerings, so that, purified by your graciousness, we may be conformed to the mysteries of your mighty love. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, at all times to acclaim you, O Lord, but in this time above all to laud you yet more gloriously when Christ our Passover has been sacrificed.

For through his saving Passion and glorious Resurrection, he has brought us from death to life and opened for us the way to new beginnings.

In his departure to you, O Father, he did not abandon us, but sent the Holy Spirit to be our guide, our comfort, and our strength, turning our sorrow into joy and leading us into the fullness of truth.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:  
**Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

Trusting that God can bring new life out of every ending and guided by the Spirit who dwells within us, we dare to say:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, by the help of your mercy,  
we may be free from sin and safe from all distress,  
as we learn to trust you in times of loss and change,  
believing that your Holy Spirit is leading us  
from sorrow into joy and from endings into new life,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
who in the face of your disciples' sorrow  
promised the gift of the Holy Spirit,  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity

in accordance with your will,  
so that, guided by your Spirit,  
we may live in trust, grow through every trial,  
and be led into the fullness of truth.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who takes away the sins of the world  
and fills our hearts with the life of the Spirit.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

In the quiet of this moment, let us remember:  
every loss we have experienced,  
every farewell we have endured,  
is held in God's loving hands.  
The Spirit is at work within us,  
gently transforming sorrow into peace  
and opening before us the path to new life.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Hear, O Lord, our prayers,  
that this most holy exchange,  
by which you have redeemed us,  
may bring your help in this present life  
and ensure for us eternal gladness.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## BLESSING

May almighty God bless you,  
and in times of change and uncertainty  
fill your hearts with trust in his loving plan;  
may he send his Holy Spirit to guide and strengthen you,  
turning every sorrow into hope and every ending into new  
life.  
And may the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,  
come down on you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go forth in peace,  
trusting that the Holy Spirit walks with you,  
bringing life and hope in every circumstance.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

Every ending in life is an opening for the Holy Spirit to do  
something new—trust the quiet work of God within you.

## Wednesday, Sixth Week of Easter

*Acts 17:15, 22–18:1; John 16:12-15*

### INTRODUCTION

Several years ago, I visited a small pottery workshop. I watched as the potter shaped a lump of clay on the wheel, spinning it slowly while carefully moulding it with his hands. At first, it seemed shapeless and fragile, but with gentle pressure, patience, and skill, the clay began to take form, revealing a vase of remarkable beauty. It was clear that the potter's touch and guidance were essential—without them, the clay would remain a formless mass.

Life often feels like that clay: messy, uncertain, and incomplete. We long to understand, to find meaning, yet at times everything seems confusing or beyond our grasp. In today's Gospel, Jesus tells His disciples, "I have many things to say to you, but they would be too much for you now." Just as the clay requires time and careful shaping, so do our hearts and minds require patience and guidance to grasp the fullness of God's truth.

The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth, acts like the potter's

hands in our lives. Through prayer, Scripture, and lived experience, the Spirit gradually shapes our understanding, deepens our faith, and reveals the love of God in ways we are ready to receive. Step by step, moment by moment, the Spirit leads us toward the clarity, peace, and wisdom that comes from union with Christ.

Paul's encounter with the Athenians gives us a concrete example of this guidance. He meets them where they are, acknowledges their search for truth, and gently leads them to the fullness of God revealed in Jesus. In the same way, the Spirit meets us in our lives, bringing understanding to confusion, hope to doubt, and gradually revealing the beauty of God's plan for each of us.

### PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS

Lord Jesus, you are always near to us, guiding us patiently in truth and love: **Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you send us the Spirit of Truth to lead us step by step toward the fullness of life: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you nurture and strengthen us, like a gardener tending a growing tree: **Lord, have mercy.**

## PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION

May almighty God,  
who is never far from us  
and patiently guides us by the Spirit of Truth,  
forgive our sins, strengthen what is weak within us,  
and nurture us to grow in faith and love,  
and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

## COLLECT

O God, who are always near to your people  
and patiently guide us by your Spirit into all truth,  
nurture within us hearts that are open to your word,  
that, growing day by day in faith and love,  
we may come to the fullness of life in Christ.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## HOMILY

I once watched a gardener tending a young sapling in a busy city park. The tree was fragile, its branches thin and vulnerable to wind and rain. Each day, the gardener supported it with stakes, pruned weak limbs, and gently watered the roots. Over time, the tree grew stronger, its trunk thickened, and its leaves reached toward the sun. Observing this, I realized how much our spiritual lives resemble that sapling: we need patient guidance and steady care to grow in truth and love.

In today's first reading, Paul addresses the Athenians, people proud of their wisdom yet searching for understanding of the divine. He meets them where they are, speaking of what they already know and gently guiding them to the fuller truth of God revealed in Christ. He reminds them—and us—that “God is not far from any of us, since it is in him that we live, and move, and exist.” This is both comforting and challenging: God is always near, inviting us into a deeper relationship.

Jesus echoes this in the Gospel, telling His disciples, “I have many things to say to you, but they would be too much for you now.” Like the young tree, our hearts and minds cannot absorb everything at once. The Spirit of Truth guides us gradually, reminding us of Jesus’ words, nurturing understanding, and leading us into God’s love. Our growth in faith is a journey, unfolding day by day, moment by moment.

This journey requires patience and attentiveness. We may struggle with doubt, confusion, or the feeling that God is distant, yet the Spirit is always at work in us. Through prayer, reflection, Scripture, and encounters with others, our understanding deepens. The Spirit shapes us, prunes what hinders, and nurtures what leads us closer to Christ, just as the gardener tends the sapling to help it reach maturity.

Paul’s approach in Athens teaches an important lesson: guidance begins with meeting people where they are. He acknowledges what they understand and desire, gradually

revealing the fullness of truth. Similarly, the Spirit meets us in our experiences, questions, and struggles, leading us step by step toward Christ. Each moment of grace, each insight, is part of the Spirit’s patient teaching.

Months later, that sapling had grown tall and strong, its branches stretching confidently toward the sky. It survived storms because it was nurtured steadily. So too, the Spirit walks with us, helping us grow in understanding and love, guiding us through life’s uncertainties, and leading us to the complete truth that sets us free. Let us open our hearts to the Spirit’s quiet work, trusting that our journey of faith, like the growth of the tree, unfolds beautifully in God’s time.

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that as we offer these gifts,  
we may allow the Spirit to shape and guide our lives,  
so that our sacrifice may be pleasing to God, the almighty  
Father.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Lord God,  
receive the gifts we bring before you  
and, through the working of your Spirit,  
shape our hearts in truth and love,  
that, growing steadily in faith,  
we may become a pleasing offering to you.  
Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.  
For you are never far from your people,  
but guide them with patient love;  
in every age you send your Spirit of Truth  
to lead hearts that seek you  
into deeper understanding and lasting peace.  
Like a wise gardener, you nurture what is fragile,  
strengthen what is weak,  
and bring to fullness what you have begun,

so that, growing in your grace, we may stand firm in faith  
and bear fruit for your Kingdom.

And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim:  
**Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching,  
we dare to say, as children guided by the Spirit of Truth:

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by your Spirit's guidance  
and growing steadily in faith and understanding,  
we may be always free from sin  
and safe from all distress,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you are always near to us  
and guide us gently into truth and love;  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who is always near to us  
and leads us into the fullness of truth.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Like a tree quietly growing,  
nourished and strengthened over time,  
so the Spirit is at work within us.  
In silence, let us entrust our lives to that gentle guidance,  
allowing God to shape us in truth, patience, and love.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Lord our God,  
nourished by this sacred gift,  
we ask that your Spirit continue to guide and form us,  
so that, growing in faith and understanding,  
we may bear lasting fruit in love  
and come to the fullness of life in Christ.  
Who lives and reigns for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## BLESSING

May almighty God bless you,  
who patiently guides you in truth  
and nurtures your growth in faith and love,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go in peace,  
trusting in the Spirit who leads you day by day.

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

The Spirit of Truth does not rush our growth.

Like a gardener tending a tree, God works patiently in us—guiding, pruning, and strengthening—so that, step by step, we may grow into the fullness of life in Christ.

## Feast of St. Matthias, Apostle

*Acts 1,15-17.20-26; Jn 15,9-17*

### INTRODUCTION

A few years ago, I visited a small local library in a quiet town. While there, I noticed a volunteer who had been quietly helping behind the scenes for years—sorting books, guiding visitors, and running programs—suddenly asked to lead a community reading initiative. At first, they hesitated, unsure if they were ready for such responsibility. But encouraged by the community and supported by prayer and reflection, they accepted the role. Over time, it became clear that this unexpected opportunity was exactly where they could make the greatest impact.

What struck me most was how naturally the volunteer adapted, not because they sought recognition, but because they had been faithfully present all along. Their daily dedication had prepared them, almost without realizing it, for a moment of calling. It was as if all the small, unnoticed acts had built a foundation that allowed them to step into this new role with confidence and purpose.

This story reminds me of today's feast and the readings

about St. Matthias. Just as this volunteer was chosen for a new role they had never anticipated, Matthias was called to step into a place among the twelve apostles after Judas' betrayal. Both stories teach us that God's call often comes in ways we do not expect, but it finds us where we are faithfully present.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you have chosen us to remain in your love:

**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you call us to love one another as you have loved us: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you invite us to trust in your will above our own: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God have mercy on us,  
forgive us our hesitation to trust his call,  
our failures to remain in his love,  
and our reluctance to love one another as he has loved us;  
and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

### **COLLECT**

O God, who assigned Saint Matthias a place in the college of Apostles, grant us, through his intercession, that, rejoicing at how your love has been allotted to us, we may merit to be numbered among the elect.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **HOMILY**

It is unlikely that Matthias ever expected to be numbered among the twelve apostles. Judas' betrayal left an empty seat, and the early Church faced a delicate question: how could the integrity of the twelve be preserved, now that Jesus was no longer with them in bodily form? The first reading tells us that the disciples approached this decision prayerfully. They nominated two candidates, Matthias and Barsabbas, but they did not rely solely on their own judgment. Instead, they prayed, asking the Lord, "Show us which of these you have chosen."

Here we see a balance between human effort and divine guidance. The disciples used their discernment to narrow the choice to two candidates, just as we must use the gifts, experience, and wisdom God has given us when making decisions. Yet they also recognized that the Lord's will must prevail. Their prayer acknowledges something we often forget: no matter how much we plan or strive, our choices are most fruitful when they align with God's desire.

The Gospel today complements this lesson. Jesus says, "You did not choose me; no, I chose you." Just as the Lord chose the apostles, so too he has chosen each of us. Our calling is not only to respond to that choice but also to remain in his love. Jesus promises that if we do, his joy will be in us, and our joy will be complete. Remaining in his love means following his command: "Love one another as I have loved you." This love connects Matthias' selection, the apostles' ministry, and our own lives.

Matthias' story reminds us of the importance of presence. He had to have been with Jesus throughout his public ministry, faithfully witnessing his mission. Similarly, we are

called to remain present to Christ every day. Our faithfulness, small though it may seem, becomes the foundation for the Church's ongoing mission.

Finally, Matthias' appointment shows us that the Lord often works through unexpected choices. Sometimes we find ourselves stepping into roles we never imagined, just like the volunteer in the library story. God invites us to respond with openness, prayer, and discernment, trusting that his choice comes before ours.

Let us remember, then, that the Lord chooses, and we respond. Today, as we celebrate St. Matthias, may we ask for the grace to recognize God's choice in our lives, remain faithful in love, and step courageously into the roles he has prepared for us—even those we never expected.

To return to the story with which we began: the library volunteer stepped into a new role with humility and trust, and it became the perfect place to serve. So too with us: when God chooses, we are called to respond, and in that response, joy and purpose are found.

## INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Pray, brothers and sisters,  
that we may offer ourselves with faithful hearts,  
trusting in God's loving choice and guidance,  
that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty  
Father.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Receive, O Lord, the offerings of your Church,  
and grant that we, who are called and chosen by you,  
may remain faithful in love and service,  
so that what we celebrate in mystery  
may bear fruit in our lives. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God,  
through Christ our Lord.

For in your loving wisdom  
you choose those who remain faithful in your presence  
and call them to serve your people.

In Saint Matthias you reveal  
that your grace prepares hearts in hidden ways  
and raises them up according to your will.  
Through him you teach us  
that our lives find purpose not in our own choosing  
but in responding with trust to your call  
and remaining always in your love.  
And so, with Angels and Archangels,  
with Thrones and Dominions,  
and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven,  
we sing the hymn of your glory,  
as without end we acclaim: **Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

Trusting not in our own choosing but in the loving call of  
the Father, and seeking the grace to remain in his love as  
his chosen children, we dare to say:

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, by the help of your mercy,  
we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress,  
as we trust not only in our own plans  
but in your loving choice for us, awaiting the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you chose your disciples and called them friends,  
teaching them to remain in your love;  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
in accordance with your will.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who calls and chooses us to remain in his love.  
Behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

In the quiet of our hearts, we remember:

“You did not choose me; I chose you.”

The Lord who has chosen us now nourishes us.  
May we remain in his love, trust his call in our lives,  
and find our joy in serving where he leads us.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Never cease, O Lord, we pray,  
to fill your family with divine gifts,  
and, through the intercession of Saint Matthias,  
grant that we may faithfully remain in your love  
and respond generously to your call,  
so that the grace we have received  
may bear lasting fruit. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## BLESSING

May almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,  
and help you to remain in his love  
and respond faithfully to his call. **Amen.**

## DISMISSAL

Go forth, glorifying the Lord by your life.

**Thanks be to God.**

## TAKE-HOME THOUGHT

God's call often comes quietly, in the midst of our daily faithfulness.

Remain in his love, trust his choice, and be ready—  
for he may be preparing you for something you never expected.

## Friday, Sixth Week of Easter

*Acts 18,9-18; John 16,20-23*

## INTRODUCTION

A few years ago, I visited a small village during springtime and watched an elderly potter at work. He was shaping a lump of clay on his wheel, and it looked so fragile, so messy, almost as if it would collapse. But slowly, with careful hands and patient guidance, the shapeless clay began to take form. I was struck by how something seemingly weak and fragile could become strong and beautiful.

Later, I saw the finished pots lined up in the sun, their shapes perfect, their surfaces smooth and shining. I realized that the process had required pressure, shaping, and patience—moments that might have seemed difficult or even discouraging, but were necessary for the beauty to emerge.

In life, we often face similar moments: pain, uncertainty, or loss that feel unbearable. Yet these are often the very

moments that shape us, preparing us for a deeper joy that could not exist without the struggle.

Today's readings remind us that sorrow is not the final word. Just as the clay is formed under pressure, and the gardener's garden blooms after pruning, so too does our human suffering often precede a profound and lasting joy.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you walk with us through storms and do not abandon us in our sorrow: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you transform our grief into joy and renew our hearts with hope: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you shape us through life's trials into vessels of your grace and light: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and, through every trial and sorrow, shape our hearts for the joy that never fades, and bring us to everlasting life.

**Amen.**

### **COLLECT**

O God, who through the mystery of your Son's Passion and Resurrection

transform sorrow into lasting joy,

grant that, amid the storms and trials of this life,

we may trust in your abiding presence

and be shaped by your grace into faithful witnesses of hope.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,

who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,

God, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

### **HOMILY**

When I was a child, I remember watching a storm roll over the hills near my home. Rain poured, winds whipped, and the world seemed dark and chaotic. I was frightened, yet after the storm passed, the air smelled fresh, the sun shone brightly, and everything seemed more alive than before. That memory comes to mind as we hear today's Gospel, where Jesus tells his disciples: "You will be sorrowful... yet your sorrow will turn into joy." Just as the

storm gave way to calm and light, so too will grief give way to joy.

Jesus compares their sorrow to childbirth: pain precedes new life. The disciples' grief at his impending departure is real and unavoidable, yet it is not the end. After his resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit, they will experience a joy that is profound, enduring, and transformative.

We see the same truth in the first reading from Acts. Paul faces opposition in Corinth, even being dragged before the Roman governor. Yet the Lord reassures him: "Do not be afraid... I am with you." Paul's courage and joy do not come from smooth circumstances, but from the presence of Christ. He models for us how faith transforms fear into hope.

All of us experience sorrow—loss, disappointment, illness, or failure. These moments can feel endless, heavy, and isolating. Yet Jesus reminds us that sorrow does not have the last word. His presence walks with us, offering comfort,

strength, and glimpses of the joy that awaits, even in our darkest hours.

This joy is not fleeting. It is the joy of the risen Christ, a joy that endures beyond circumstances, stronger than fear, loss, or uncertainty. Like the potter shaping clay or the storm clearing to reveal a bright sky, our trials prepare us to receive this joy, transforming our hearts and lives.

I think back to the image of the storm I watched as a child. Just as the world was renewed after the rain, so too our hearts are renewed when we trust in the Lord. Our grief, our "good Fridays," give way to the Easter joy of Christ. May we carry this joy in our hearts today, confident that one day we will see Him face to face and share in the fullness of a joy without end.

### **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that, as our lives are shaped through trials and hope, our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

O God, who in your wisdom transform our struggles into grace, accept these gifts we bring before you, and, as you shape us through the trials of life, make us worthy to share in the joy of your Son's Resurrection. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## PREFACE

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation, always and everywhere to give you thanks, Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God, through Christ our Lord.

For in the mystery of his Death and Resurrection you have revealed that sorrow does not endure forever, but is transformed into joy.

In him, the storms of our lives give way to light, and the trials that burden us become the very means by which you shape our hearts for the fullness of life.

Through him, your presence remains with us, strengthening us in fear, sustaining us in hope,

and leading us to the joy that no one can take away.

And so, with Angels and Archangels, with Thrones and Dominions, and with all the hosts and Powers of heaven, we sing the hymn of your glory, as without end we acclaim: **Holy, Holy, Holy...**

## INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching, confident that God walks with us through every sorrow and leads us into joy, we dare to say:

## EMBOLISM

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil, and graciously grant peace in our days, that, amid the storms and trials of life, we may be sustained by your presence and guided toward the joy you promise; that, by the help of your mercy, we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress, as we await the blessed hope and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## PRAYER FOR PEACE

Lord Jesus Christ, who bring calm after every storm and light after every darkness, look upon your people who struggle with fear, sorrow, and uncertainty.

Speak your word of peace into our restless hearts, strengthen us with your abiding presence, and transform our trials into hope.

Grant that, trusting in you who turn sorrow into joy, we may live in serenity and courage, and become instruments of your peace in the world.

Who live and reign for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## INVITATION TO COMMUNION

Behold the Lamb of God,  
behold him who takes away the sins of the world.  
Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.  
Behold the One who turns our sorrow into joy  
and renews our hearts with his presence.

## SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION

Lord, in this sacred moment,  
you remind us that no sorrow is wasted in your hands.

As you have fed us with your Body and Blood,  
renew our hearts with hope. In every storm we face,  
help us trust that your joy is already being formed within  
us, quietly, patiently, and faithfully.

## PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Grant, we pray, almighty God,  
that, having received the Sacrament of your Son,  
we may be strengthened in every trial  
and renewed in the joy that comes from your presence,  
until the day when our sorrow is turned into everlasting  
gladness. Through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## BLESSING

May almighty God bless you,  
who in his goodness walks with you through every storm,  
strengthens you in times of trial,  
and fills your hearts with the joy of the Risen Christ;  
and may the blessing of almighty God,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit,  
come down on you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go forth in peace, trusting that your sorrow will be turned into joy.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

The storms of life do not have the final word—God is already shaping your sorrow into a deeper, lasting joy.

## **Saturday, Sixth Week of Easter**

*Acts 18,23-28; John 16,23-28*

## **INTRODUCTION**

A few years ago, I read about a young gardener in a small village who loved to cultivate flowers. He had great enthusiasm but little knowledge about proper planting techniques. One day an elderly gardener noticed him struggling and offered guidance. She showed him when to plant, how to water, and how to care for each flower. With her help, the neglected patch of land slowly became a vibrant garden that brought joy to the whole community.

This story reminds us that growth—whether in a garden, a skill, or faith—rarely happens in isolation. We all need guidance, encouragement, and a community willing to nurture our potential. Today's readings point us to this same truth in the life of the early Church.

In the first reading we meet Apollos, a learned man from Alexandria who knew the Scriptures well and spoke with eloquence, yet he still needed deeper formation. Priscilla

and Aquila recognised his potential and patiently helped him understand the way of the Lord more fully. Later, the believers in Ephesus supported him with a letter of recommendation so that he could continue serving others.

Even today, the “domestic church”—our families and homes—remains central. Long before church buildings existed, Christians gathered in homes to pray, learn, and support one another. Like Priscilla and Aquila, we too are called to encourage one another in faith so that together we may grow and share the gifts God has given us.

### **PENITENTIAL ACT WITH KYRIE INVOCATIONS**

Lord Jesus, you call us to grow in faith through the guidance and support of others: **Lord, have mercy.**

Christ Jesus, you teach us to pray to the Father in your name and to trust in his love: **Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you invite us to encourage one another and build up your Church with our gifts: **Lord, have mercy.**

### **PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION**

May almighty God,  
who in his mercy guides us through the wisdom and encouragement of one another,  
and through prayer in his Son’s name nurtures the gifts within us, have mercy on us, forgive us our sins,  
and bring us to everlasting life. Amen.

### **COLLECT**

O God, loving Father,  
you guide your people through the wisdom and care of one another,  
and you teach us to grow in faith through prayer in your Son’s name;  
grant that, supported by one another and open to your Spirit,  
we may nurture the gifts you have given us  
and build up your Church in love and unity.  
Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. Amen.

## HOMILY:

I once heard about a young potter in a village who had a natural talent for shaping clay but had never learned how to fire his pieces correctly. Frustrated, he kept breaking his pots. One day, a master potter noticed him and offered to teach him the techniques he needed. With guidance and encouragement, the young potter's work improved, and eventually he created beautiful pottery that became admired far beyond his village. His gift had been nurtured, and he could now share it with others.

This story reminds me of Apollos in the first reading. He was a learned man from Alexandria, eloquent in speech and knowledgeable in Scripture, yet he was not fully formed in the faith. Priscilla and Aquila recognized his potential and guided him in the way of the Lord. Later, the believers in Ephesus wrote him a letter of recommendation, helping him continue his mission in Corinth. Their actions show a Church built on encouragement, guidance, and support—where each member helps another grow and share their gifts.

Jesus, in today's Gospel, tells his disciples to pray to the Father in his name. He promises that their joy will be

complete. This doesn't mean that everything we ask for comes exactly as we expect, but that prayer opens us to God's presence and action. Prayer equips us with the Spirit's gifts so we can encourage, support, and serve others, just as Priscilla and Aquila supported Apollos.

Faith grows in community. We need each other's gifts and guidance, just as we need the Spirit's help in prayer. Through our support, encouragement, and prayer, we build up the Church and bring joy to one another. Each act of teaching, each word of encouragement, each gesture of love participates in God's work of nurturing faith.

I think of a small story from my own life: a young teacher once helped me understand a difficult concept I had been struggling with for months. Her patience, encouragement, and clear guidance made all the difference. Because of her, I was able to pass that knowledge on to others. So it is with faith: in supporting one another, we cultivate gifts that can blossom far beyond what we imagine, walking together on the journey from the Father and back to the Father. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO THE PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

Pray, brothers and sisters, that our sacrifice,  
offered in gratitude for the gifts God has nurtured in us  
and in support of one another in faith,  
may be acceptable to God, the almighty Father.

## **PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS**

O God, who teach us to grow through the guidance and  
encouragement of one another,  
receive these gifts we offer you,  
and grant that, through this sacrifice,  
we may be strengthened in prayer and love  
to serve and build up your Church.  
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **PREFACE**

It is truly right and just, our duty and our salvation,  
always and everywhere to give you thanks,  
Lord, holy Father, almighty and eternal God.  
  
For you call your people to grow in faith,  
not in isolation, but in the communion of your Church.

Through the guidance of faithful disciples  
and the power of prayer in your Son's name,  
you nurture the gifts you have planted within us  
and lead us to fullness of joy.

And so, with hearts united in love and encouragement,  
we join the Angels and Saints in their hymn of praise,  
as without end we acclaim: Holy, Holy, Holy...

## **INVITATION TO THE OUR FATHER**

At the Saviour's command and formed by divine teaching,  
confident that the Father hears us when we pray in Jesus'  
name, we dare to say:

## **EMBOLISM**

Deliver us, Lord, we pray, from every evil,  
and graciously grant peace in our days,  
that, sustained by your mercy  
and strengthened through the support of one another,  
we may be always free from sin and safe from all distress,  
as we await the blessed hope  
and the coming of our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

## **PRAYER FOR PEACE**

Lord Jesus Christ,  
you promised that our joy would be complete  
when we turn to the Father in your name;  
look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church,  
and graciously grant her peace and unity  
as we support and encourage one another in love.  
Who live and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

## **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

Behold the Lamb of God,  
who strengthens us with his presence  
and sends us to support and encourage one another in  
faith. Blessed are those called to the supper of the Lamb.

## **SHORT MEDITATION AFTER COMMUNION**

Lord, you have nourished us with your presence.  
Help us to recognise the gifts you have placed within us,  
and to use them with generosity. May we be attentive to  
one another, offering guidance, encouragement, and love,  
so that together we may grow in faith  
and share your joy with the world.

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Nourished by the Body and Blood of your Son, O Lord,  
we ask that, strengthened by this sacrament, we may grow  
in faith through prayer and in love through mutual support,  
so that we may build up your Church and share the joy that  
comes from you. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## **BLESSING**

May the Lord bless you and guide you,  
strengthening you through the encouragement of one  
another, and filling you with joy as you pray in his name.  
And may almighty God bless you,  
the Father, and the Son, ✠ and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## **DISMISSAL**

Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by supporting and  
encouraging one another in faith.

## **TAKE-HOME THOUGHT**

Faith grows when it is shared.

This week, offer one word of encouragement or guidance  
to someone — you may be helping a gift to flourish far  
beyond what you can see.